

a blunder before he knew her? Then the interest for the cultivated reader decreases. Crimes and blunders are talkative: the battle is silent no longer. Had we to make a motto for Mrs. Williamson, we would borrow a popular rhythm, and sing, "Pray Heaven for an artist's pen and let the foolish feuilletton go."

Notes on Novels.

[These notes on the Week's Fiction are not necessarily final. Reviews of a selection will follow.]

DESIDERIO.

By EDMUND G. GARDNER.

An episode in the Renaissance, with a Botticelli portrait as frontispiece. As this bright volume is to be read mainly as a work of fiction, the author trusts that if it should fall into the hands of any professed students of the Italian Renaissance they will find it in their hearts to forgive him for the slight liberties he has taken with two of Savonarola's famous sermons. (Dent. 4s. 6d.)

THE DARK O' THE MOON.

By S. R. CROCKETT.

Being certain further histories of the folk called Raiders. Mr. Crockett's bustling boot and saddle style is well known to his admirers, who will no doubt be glad to meet Hector Faa and Joyce Faa again, and to read of "the sad yet laughable rebellion of our poor cottier folk, which few outside the bounds of Galloway have even heard of," and of the king of all the wild folk called gipsies in this realm of Scotland. (Macmillan. 6s.)

THE KEYS OF THE HOUSE.

By ALGERNON GISSING.

The life story of a secluded, imaginative boy, the motive being the evolution of his character "between the clashing forces of nature and the world." The story, which is poetical and tragical, passes in country places, and ends with the hero's marriage. "I'm wed to the bride Mr. Brant gave me, the only one a man like me can want. If you find her, Abram, you find a love passing the love of women. It's a love no mortal can take from you, that no waves can ever drown. If any——" (Methuen. 6s.)

NORA LESTER.

By ANNA HOWARTH.

It opens in an orphanage, and introduces us to Gronow and Noel, who play important parts in this quiet, carefully written story. "No two children in the whole institution were such close friends as these two lads, dissimilar in every respect. . . . 'Gronow and his shadow,' the other boys called them." Half-way through the book a fortune of thirty thousand is bequeathed to Nora Lester, and Gronow makes her promise that she will never give or lend anything to her father without first asking him. (Smith, Elder. 6s.)

MISTRESS BARBARA CUNLIFFE. By HALLIWELL SUTCLIFFE.

A Yorkshire love story of the year 1830, with which is interwoven a minute account of the Yorkshire wool commerce of the period. The hero, a squire's son, fallen upon evil days, embarks in the wool trade in order to buy back the ancestral estates. The dialect is of this character: "Well, but he's a gooid 'un, whativer he lakes at up i' th' laithe; an' he's father, too, to th' little mistress—ay, there she is, God bless her! I thowt we'd win a glance fro' her." (Unwin. 6s.)

JOHN LOTT'S ALICE.

By FRANCES G. BURMESTER.

A story of a county. In Essex the scene is laid, and there it passes. When Alice makes her prayer at the end, it is the bells of Braintree that tell her the moment when to begin. The first chapter is all about Essex. "Have I kept you too long among its fields and lanes?" asks the author, "or will you tarry a little longer and learn of its people, their language, and their ways." Unsophisticated characters people the book. (Grant, Richards. 6s.)

A MYSTERY OF ST. RULES.

By ETHEL F. HEDDLE.

For St. Rules the "discerning reader" may, of course, read St. Andrews, and Miss Heddle appropriately puts on the title-page a stanza of a poem by Mr. Andrew Lang. The story purports to present the "human comedy" of the Scots University city. Professors perambulate its pages, and the dialect appears very early. "Ye ken very weel, sir, that when ye're engrossed wi' they chemicals i' the laboratory, ye wad say onything!" (Blackie. 6s.)

MONSIEUR MARTIN.

By WYMOND CAREY.

A romance of the Great Swedish War. "Angrily I threw the volume into a corner of the room." The volume was none other than Hobbes's *Leviathan*. The thrower of the *Leviathan* into a corner was tutor to the mistress of Polenstjerna, daughter of one of Charles XI.'s most trusted councillors. The tutor, Hugh Martin, yeoman born, tells the story, which begins on "this glorious August day in the year of grace 1699." (Blackwood. 6s.)

THE ASSASSINS.

By NEVILL MYERS MEAKIN.

A romance of the Crusades, which begins with an "Ali hu Allah!" the war-cry of the Assassins, which rang down the gorge, waking the echoes of the fight in the afternoon, and dying a long-drawn wail, a dirge over the fallen. In Book II. we come to Saladin and the siege of Acre. There is plenty of fighting, and bloodshed. Here is a passage. "The scimitar had almost severed him in twain, and his blood flowed, filling up the hoof marks in the wet clay. But his hatred of his slayer held him back from death till he had spoken what was on his mind." (Heinemann. 6s.)

FAIR ROSALIND.

By J. E. MUDDOCK.

A portrait of fair Rosalind, embowered in a green heart, figures on the cover of this story of the time of Henry VIII. which opens on the afternoon of a brilliant May day in London. Fair Rosalind herself, the unhappy Margaret Sheldrake, the rival brothers, the figure of the great Thomas Cromwell, and the pageantry of the period, all glide before us, while such episodes as the escape from the Tower, the insurrection and the plottings of rival statesmen, lend interest to the pages.

THE DEAD INGLEBY.

By TOM GALLON.

Melodrama and sentiment. The villain is Paul Vamoria, who "pays the price at last." "Keep off! keep off!" he cried, hoarsely. "You wouldn't butcher me like this?" But that was just what "the strong old sinewy hand" of his enemy meant to do. The excitement throughout the story is due to the money that "old Mr. Ingleby," dying, must leave behind him. Paul Vamoria thinks it will come his way, but the reader has his doubts. (Hutchinson. 6s.)

THE KING'S SCEPTRE.

By W. E. GROGAN.

A romantic story of a good king, Ludwig the Great, who died; of Prince Leofric, his brother, who had much of the old Adam in him, and of an act of self-sacrifice performed by the new king after reigning for four years. The kingdom is called Hartzen, and there are barons and lords and men-at-arms and a cardinal and conspirators, and something pretty about the kingdom of the heart that King Arnac won when he resigned the kingdom of Hartzen. (Arrowsmith. 6s.)

A VISION OF BEAUTY.

By JOSEPH HATTON.

The scene in the early part is laid in London, and deals with the adventures of a young author and journalist, who comes under the fascinations of an Oriental beauty on her way to become a countess. Later the reader is taken to Monte Carlo, Aix-les-Bains, and the Philippines. (Hutchinson. 6s.)